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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-fifth year

Identical letters dated 7 June 2010 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On the forty-third anniversary of the Israeli occupation, and a few days after the illegal and brutal Israeli aggression against the Gaza Freedom Flotilla carrying humanitarian aid to the besieged Gaza Strip, I write to draw your attention to the continued illegal Israeli policies and practices throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

Israeli occupying forces continue their inhumane and illegal siege and brutal attacks on the Gaza Strip. Today, Israeli occupying forces killed four Palestinians off the Gaza coast. On 1 June 2010, Israeli warplanes and tanks invaded several areas within Gaza, resulting in the killing of five Palestinians. These latest Israeli military attacks signal an Israeli intention to reignite the cycle of violence and cause further suffering in an already devastated society, living a humanitarian disaster because of the punitive, inhumane siege that Israel, the occupying Power, has imposed on the Palestinian population in Gaza for more than three years.

Palestinian Jerusalemites remain the target of a deliberate, aggressive and illegal policy by Israel, the occupying Power, which continues to consolidate its control over Occupied East Jerusalem while artificially creating an overwhelming Jewish majority in the city through the expulsion and forced displacement of the indigenous Palestinian population as well as the transfer of more Israeli settlers to the occupied City. As a continuation of this illegal policy, Israeli occupation authorities recently revoked the Jerusalem residency rights of four elected members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Mohammad Abu Tair, Mohammad Totah, Khaled Abu Arafa and Ahmed Abu Atoun. This illegal measure has forbidden them from living in the city of their birth.

For decades now, the occupying Power has stripped thousands of Palestinian Jerusalemites of their identity cards and residency rights in Occupied East Jerusalem, as part of a larger policy aimed at emptying the city of as many Palestinians as possible while advancing its Judaization. Indeed, recent reports

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indicate that tens of thousands more Palestinian Jerusalemites are under threat of being stripped of their residency rights as Israel continues to pursue this illegal policy of ethnically cleansing Occupied East Jerusalem of its indigenous population and the city's de facto annexation.

In the meantime, the terror campaign of illegal Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians continues to intensify, especially in the West Bank city of Al-Khalil (Hebron), while the Israeli occupying forces choose to stand idly by and watch. On 2 June 2010, a car belonging to an illegal Israeli settler opened fire on a group of Palestinian students at the entrance of Al-Arroub camp in the city, leaving two 16-year-old students, Mu'taz Mousa Omran and Ibrahim Mohammad Al-Bes, seriously injured. This atrocious attack shows the utter Israeli disregard for the lives of innocent Palestinian civilians.

These brutal and illegal Israeli policies and practices are in blatant violation of international law and must be confronted directly, firmly and immediately by the international community. Standing idly by while such actions continue can only encourage the occupying Power to add another long list of war crimes to its heavy dossier. The international community, including the Security Council, has clear responsibilities in this regard, including the protection of civilians in situations of armed conflict, including foreign occupation. Hence, we call upon the Security Council to take urgent measures to redress this grave situation and bring an end to the dangerous culture of impunity Israel has thus far enjoyed.

Israel must respect its obligations as an occupying Power under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. Moreover, Israel must be called upon to uphold its responsibility towards the civilian Palestinian population from further attacks of settlers, whose illegal presence it has funded, protected and encouraged. Such actions are international legal obligations. The international community must ensure that Israel proves its good faith and commitment to reaching a peace agreement through concrete actions rather than empty rhetoric.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 368 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 5 May 2010 (A/ES-10/489-S/2010/230), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations